



# Citizens catching the rain for climate adaptation in Wrocław

**Wrocław, Poland**

## IN A NUTSHELL

*Wrocław is providing grants to citizens to install rainwater harvesting systems and collect rainwater for future use, helping to reduce tap water consumption and the pressure on the sewage system. This action allows citizens to get directly involved and benefit from the city's local adaptation plan.*

## Rainwater management at household scale

After adopting a resolution on water resources protection, the City Council of Wrocław launched the 'Catch the rain' programme in August 2019.

The objective of the programme was to reduce the use of tap water and have less water entering the overloaded municipal sewage system, thanks to support to citizens for effective rainwater management in their households. Collection of rainwater relieves drainage, reduces maintenance costs, and its use can reduce the consumption of drinkable water by up to 50%.

Catch the Rain is one of a number of adaptive actions implemented by the city to contribute to the Miejski Plan Adaptacji Do Zmian Klimatu, the 2030 Adaptation Plan, and in particular to the priority of rainwater management. These actions develop thematic programmes that promote installation of rainwater retention systems on private properties. Involving households and private citizens in the implementation of the action, the Catch the Rain programme helped Wrocław to raise awareness of the impacts and opportunities of local climate adaptation, and how these actions can improve quality of life.



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## WROCLAW



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**Population:**

642,869

**Area**

292.92 km<sup>2</sup>

**Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since:**

2016

**CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction target:**

40% by 2030 and adaptation

## How is Wrocław implementing the programme

Beneficiaries of the programme are citizens with property located within city limits of Wrocław. They can apply for a grant to cover the costs of installation of rainwater harvesting systems at the precipitation site (including turf, rooftops, balconies), used for collecting rainwater for future use. Possible installations include rain gardens, underground and free-standing rainwater storage tanks, and absorbing wells.

The grant covers up to 80% of the investment, maximum 5,000 PLN (~€1,133). The eligible costs include all expenditure necessary to install rainwater harvesting systems e.g. purchase of materials, transport and groundwork.

The 2019 pilot programme was a success, with the total amount for grants

being used up already after three weeks from the launch and requests for continuation, with 143 applications submitted for a total amount of more than 600,000 PLN (€135,259).

As a result, the budget allocated for the pilot programme co-funded implementation of 92 grant agreements that resulted in installation of:

- ▶ 1 rain garden;
- ▶ 2 absorbing wells;
- ▶ 55 free-standing tanks adjacent to rain gutters;
- ▶ 34 underground rainwater tanks.

The city decided to launch a second edition of Catch the Rain in February 2020, doubling the funding pool and allocating all available grants in five weeks.

## Evaluating results

Wrocław evaluated the results of the 2019 edition of the programme at the end of the calendar year, using as the main environmental indicator the total capacity of systems to collect and store rainwater that were installed by the programme's beneficiaries. It found that installations developed in 2019 allowed collection of 142 m<sup>3</sup> liters of water during each steady rainfall lasting 15 minutes or longer.

The most popular solution chosen by programme beneficiaries was installation of free-standing tanks adjacent to rain gutters – in 2019 there were 55 of these out of 92 installations made in total. Most often, the citizens installed single tanks, with capacity from 265 to 460 liters, by each rain gutter. Some installations were made by serial-parallel connection of several tanks to one rain gutter and in those cases the total capacity reached up to 3,200 liters.

In terms of awareness raising, the response to the programme from citizens demonstrated that many people are already aware of the need to manage rainwater effectively. The opportunity to benefit from city grants brought an additional boost and motivation to take action and install rainwater retention systems that would not have been realised otherwise due to lack of funding.



### KEY FIGURES

**92** grants allocated to citizens

**80%** of the costs covered

**142** m<sup>3</sup> liters of water collected in 2019 during each steady rainfall lasting **15** minutes or longer



### FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Financing source(s):**  
City budget
- + **Total project budget:**  
250,000 PLN / ~€56,600 (2019);  
500,000 PLN / ~€113,300 (2020).
- + **Grant amount:**  
up to 5,000 PLN (~ €1,133)

### USEFUL LINKS

- ▶ Website of the programme: <https://www.wroclaw.pl/srodowisko/zlap-deszcz>



### CONTACT

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